1:Du Bois E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
OF5 Alor OF5

(*kokda fala*); descendants of the other brothers are simply called middle ones.

Second, there are the Male Houses (*neng fala*). This is a literal translation of the native term. Each individual has six Male Houses, which will be designated in this volume as Male House I, Male House II, and so on. These relationships are reckoned as follows: *Male House I*, the ego's mother's brother and male offspring; *Male House II*, father's Male House I (i.e., father's mother's brother and male descendants); *Male House III*, mother's Male House I (i.e., mother's mother's brother and male descendants); *Male House IV*, father's Male House II (i.e., father's father's mother's brother and male descendants); *Male House V*, mother's Male House II (i.e., mother's father's mother's brother and male descendants); *Male House VI*, father's Male House III (i.e., father's mother's mother's brother and male descendants).

It becomes obvious at once that the mother's brother is the stressed relationship but that it is stressed bilaterally with a slight weighting on the paternal side. Another aspect of this kin group is that it includes all the bilaterally reckoned lineages other than ego's for three ascending generations on the father's side and two ascending generations on the mother's side. It is to be noted that every son has slightly different Male House affiliations from his father. The Male Houses function in exchange relationships especially in connection with death services. A full description of form and function must await subsequent publication.

Third, there is the Female House (*mayoa fala*). This is also a literal translation of the native term. This is a group in which are included all bilaterally reckoned kin who appear neither in the lineage nor in the Male House. It is not subdivided as is the Male House group nor is the concept so sharply defined. However, basically it hinges also on descendants of pairs of siblings, i.e., on the father's sister and the mother's sister. In it are also included descendants through females of Male House kin. The functions of this group are not sharply defined but it is composed in a general way of the people on whom one may call for supplementary assistance in ceremonial and financial exchanges.

There is no trace of brother and sister avoidance, nor are there formalized joking or respect relationships. This negative point may have importance for what follows, since one of the characteristic features of life in Atimelang, as I see it, is the absence of formal structure, especially in interpersonal relationships.

According to the house-to-house census, the number of occupants to a dwelling ranges from one to eight. In this, as in other phases of social organization, there is no rigidity. Theoretically, residence is pat-

1:Du Bois E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
OF5 Alor OF5

Chapter 7

Adults and Institutions

000 THE foregoing chapters have searched for the possible genesis of the modal personality in Atimelang and simultaneously have tried to indicate how that personality is both the product of social forms and the active agent in them. In this section the attempt will be made to search further for the interrelated forms and forces of personality as they manifest themselves in institutions, values, and everyday modes of emotional expression and behavior among adults.

STATUS AND FINANCE

554 In the formation of personality the devices furnished by the society for placing oneself in relation to other individuals are important. In other words, the status forms of a culture may well have significant repercussions on ego development. In Atimelang there are four main factors determining status: age, sex, wealth, and kinship. The age and sex factors are beyond individual control and function automatically. This might be an optimal orientation situation for the individual, although the reverse of the coin must not be forgotten since it automatically disfranchises women and the young. The wealth factor is considered almost a function of age, although in practice it is far from
556 being so. It is noteworthy that wealth status is not formalized. There is hardly a trace of institutional expression of rank or of inheritance of financial position. Every man's financial resources are largely, although
764 not completely, consumed in his death ceremonies, since the wealthier a man is, the more elaborate his postmortem prestige. Social prestige depending on wealth, therefore, must be constantly validated by individual effort. The burden as well as the rewards of such effort rests
885 primarily on middle-aged men. The manipulation of the wealth-status system is one requiring constant vigilance, aggression, chicanery, and an excellent memory. The stress that successful competition places on a
887 man is perhaps best illustrated by the fact that, if they have able sons, old men usually withdraw gradually from active participation and retain power only in an advisory capacity. They leave the actual dunning to younger and more vigorous men.

562 Every competitive system automatically implies that a large portion of the population will fail to achieve the goal set up by the culture. Granting, therefore, that a competitive system will automatically debar

1:Du Bois E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
OF5 Alor OF5

556 578 dog." The boys reported this to their father and the wealth contest broke out. Maliseni's Male House I, a man called Malikalieta, came to his support. This time Maliseni was victorious in the reckoning of slaughtered pigs.

578 602 [764] In 1938 Malefani died and there were whispered rumors that he had been poisoned by Maliseni's brother, because of their protracted hostility. This did not prevent Maliseni from giving burial services as the representative of the Male House IV and from complaining so effectively about the payment for these services that he raised the level of payment for all the six Male House representatives. The Male House kin, seeing their advantage in this quarrel, supported Maliseni. There was every indication that Malefani's sons were inheriting their father's feud with the Maliseni faction. This did not mean that the two sets of opponents would not join forces against a third person when it was to their mutual advantage. In fact, some seven months later they stood back to back against Malikalieta in a quarrel over payments for their services as house-building partners in the erection of Malikalieta's lineage house.

556 602 154 This matter of wealth feuds has been described in some detail for the light it throws on the rare but ever-present possibility of using wealth contests as a check for excessive chicanery and as an expression of personal hostilities; for the light it throws on elaborate kin involvements as well as the completely realistic alignment of loyalties, which are determined more by the particular situation than by any formal and consistent policy. The possibility of a wealth contest is also a reason why neutrals fear hostility between powerful men. Should such a contest break out no one's pigs are safe.

681 [177] In cases of fines through challenge and shame (*kaiukek*) the system is far less dramatic and involves fewer people. It is a procedure that has been falling into disuse, since the Dutch government has set up a system of litigation by means of which fines can be levied through public debate. Litigation usually results in a more moderate fine and more rapid dispatch of business. However, fines through challenge are still [154] resorted to where the principals are particularly incensed and feel that only a very ostentatious wealth display can assuage their feelings. There is a case of such a challenge in Mangma's autobiography, the details of which have been deleted from the autobiography and are inserted here.

695 681 627 Mangma had been accused of intercourse with a girl with the obvious intention of trying to force him into a marriage. He proved his innocence through a hot millet ordeal and then insisted on further ex-

1:Du Bois E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
OF5 Alor OF5

place, the wielder of the pole begins switching the bundle rapidly back and forth as he circles the dance place six times. He is surrounded by the buyers, who try to beat the head bundle as it flicks back and forth. At the end of the sixth round the buyers seize the pole and bundle, rush to the village edge, and toss the bundle off into the bush, where no further attention is paid to it. Now the dead kinsman has a "spouse" (i.e., the fellow victim) and will not return to make trouble for his living kin. The thrashing given the head bundle is supposed to kill the spirit of the spouse so that it too will no longer be a menace.

The final ceremonial gesture is the mock feeding of the buyers. They stand in a row on their dance place and a piece of rice cone is offered them. They pretend to take a bite, but actually the rice is rapidly passed over their shoulders to children standing behind each buyer, who run off and eat it secretly. This appeases the dead kinsman. The same procedure is repeated by the sellers on the village boundary. This appeases the spouse of the dead kin.

It is consistent with the picture drawn so far of food and finance that the malignancy even of souls cannot be fully appeased until gestures of this sort are made. The cost of such appeasement must act to curtail excessive head-hunting. The financial costliness of placating the dead is true also for the ordinary death feasts and for the spirit-bird ceremonies that replace the death feast series in cases of violent deaths. This latter type of ceremony parallels in form that just described for a human head. There are three or four species of small birds which, when killed and dried, may be sold as spouses for those dead from accident or from dysentery, leprosy, or smallpox. It is important in terms of local values that even though a man has caught a spirit bird he may not use it to appease his own dead kin, but must buy one from some other set of six captors.

An instance of nice adjustment occurred when the Dutch put an end to head-hunting. Spirit-bird ceremonies were substituted for head ceremonies where vengeance had not yet been secured, so that the soul of the murdered man could be appeased. The Alorese were caught by cultural changes between the fear of their dead kin and the living Dutch. Fortunately they had at hand a ceremonial device they could, and were willing to, substitute in order to avoid this dilemma. If this device had not been available it is possible that the natives would have feared their dead more than the Dutch garrison and that head-hunting would not have ended so quickly and easily. As it was, the solution was probably as much of a relief to the natives as it was to the government.

1:Du Bois E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
OF5 Alor OF5

manic behavior there was much sly humor. In fact, all of these cases were frequently sources of considerable amusement to bystanders.

Probably all these persons were of the manic-depressive type. This psychosis is much more obvious and socially disturbing than certain other mental illnesses, which may account for the emphasis on them. Whether or not the individual's behavior is correctly reported, it is interesting that informants all stress as symptoms of insanity violence, both against people and property, obscenity, and scatologic behavior.

To summarize and to repeat the linkage among all the phenomena so far discussed, we find that spirit possession is associated with hyperexcitability and in its severer forms with manic episodes containing only poorly disguised suicidal impulses, although suicide is not institutionalized. Further, spirit possession in certain types of illness is interpreted as death and leads to the burial of live persons. All these factors may serve to keep toned down the avowedly possessional faculties of seers so that there is considerable doubt about true trance and a general lack of impressiveness in seers' performances, which, in turn, may be factors contributing to their lack of marked social recognition. Lastly, the attitudes and dangers clustering around spirit possession may explain the resistance to intoxicants.

BURIAL

All these digressions lead finally to actual behavior connected with death and burial. When a person dies, the male lineal kin set out immediately to secure the shroud and as many contributions as possible in mokos, gongs, pigs, and food. The shroud will be worn after death by the deceased. This is part of his postmortem prestige, but since cloth is at a premium, this debt will have to be repaid at high interest rates, and around the shroud in future years will center most of the haggling for repayment. Forehanded kinsmen of the proper category see to it that they are prepared with a shroud of high value. Their eyes are on future profit. As a result the best pieces of cloth in the community are being continually put out of circulation. With the onset of death the female kin begin to prepare rice and corn. Not more than one or two women stay near the corpse to wail.

The spouse of the deceased is felt to be in so much danger from the dead that he leaves the immediate vicinity and stands guard with unsheathed knife, to prevent the ghost from carrying him off. For the following night and day he should not sleep. (These precautions are observed by both sexes.) Burial usually occurs not more than twenty-four to thirty-six hours after death, and it is courteous of friends to rush the procedure by urging the family on with comments about the stench of the body.

1:Du Bois E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
OF5 Alor OF5

764 stench of the body. Delays are usually caused by financial dickerings between lineal kin and the Male Houses.

Once the actual burial gets under way there is an outburst of wailing and a din of beaten gongs. This lasts for the half-hour to an hour that it takes four or six buriers to dig the grave, flex and wrap the corpse, and toss it hastily into the grave, which they fill rapidly. The whole procedure is carried out in an atmosphere of excited tension. Burials accompanied by large financial displays are among the rare events from which children are chased away (often quite ineffectually) because such displays are considered something deleterious and contaminating. When the body is dropped into the grave, the spouse, standing off at some distance, chops a string in two. This symbolically severs their relationship and prevents the ghost's returning for him. The rite, however, is not immediately reassuring since for two or three months after burial the spouse will still carry an unsheathed knife wherever he goes. "They do this until they forget"—which is a measure, perhaps, of the duration of grief.

157 I do not wish to imply that there is no grief, or even that it is slight.
764 I have seen genuine and undoubtedly deeply felt grief at death; but my
571 impression, gathered from a considerable range of material, is in agreement with that from quite other realms of human relationship—that there is no premium on cherishing sentimental ties once they are irrelevant. Expediency and realism are the determinants. People will be concerned over the illness of a kinsman but, once he is dead, they go on to other things. A woman, well-liked in the community, died and her "sisters" wept two hours for her, but then became engrossed in other duties. A mother who lost her third infant in succession was deeply grieved but in twenty-four hours was preoccupied once more by her quarrels with her husband and by her field work. When I bought the crop of the field on which my house was to be built, the woman who owned the field wept. A year later I had the opportunity to ask her about it, and she said in a matter-of-fact fashion, "My twelve-year-old daughter planted that field, and she died just two or three months before you came. When I saw her crop being pulled up, my heart remembered and I cried. But now I don't think of it any more." The expediency and realism in human relationships is basically a shallowness of positive affect.

Balanced against this, enough has been said in other connections to make it clear that the dead are sources of malignant power, i.e., negative
[157] affect. That death feasts may be delayed so long is perhaps a sign that negative affect is also shallow. Certainly by comparison with some

1:Du Bois E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
OF5 Alor OF5

Melanesians the Atimelangers cannot be considered ghost-ridden. The interesting point is that these potentially malignant dead are always one's most immediate kin. People have two souls. At death one goes to a village below if the death has not been violent. If it has been, the soul goes above (*adiy bong*), and a spirit-bird ceremony must be given for it. The second soul is the one that loiters about the village boundary and against which precautions are taken at the time of burial.

It is at this time that the soul is particularly dangerous because the deceased wishes company. To placate it in this early and more potent phase of malignancy and to relegate it to the village boundary there are special feasts, the Hevelaberka held on the fourth day after death and the Hevelakang on the ninth day after death. During these nine days a few minor restrictions are observed by the family, including taboos on salt, bathing, and sexual intercourse. During that time there may be also one or two all-night gong-playing memorials (*sinewai*), including the feeding of the guests who attend. It is during these nine days that there occurs all the ostentatious use of pigs and the incurrence of debts, which must be repaid in subsequent years, or even generations, in a series of feasts called Rolik, Baleti, and Tila (also called Ato in its final phase). The first two of these feasts are named, significantly enough, after two ways of preparing rice; the first refers to rice rolls, the second to small woven containers in which raw rice is boiled.

The third feast can really be broken down into a number of ceremonies. To the whole series I have given the name of the first ceremony, (*Tila*), which means *string* and refers to the purchase of either a sheep or a carabao for the final and supreme death feast after which the soul of the dead is banished from the village boundary and thus from interference in human affairs. The motivations for giving payoff feasts have already been discussed in the chapter on adults and institutions. The pressure of creditors, prestige, and, perhaps most often, illness of descendants lead to these final ceremonies. The dead become impatient and annoyed at the lack of postmortem prestige and manifest their displeasure by making trouble for the living.

As soon as an illness is diagnosed as the manifestation of a displeased soul, a small quantity of rice is offered it in a bamboo container raised on a pole. From here on, plans for a payoff feast should get under way; but frequently long delays occur, and it is hoped that meanwhile the small original offering will stave off the soul. In addition, the dead may withhold good crops if the smaller garden feasts are not made in the fields they have worked or if they are not named and fed at a series of new-corn rituals owned by various lineages. All this placation of the dead

1:Du Bois E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
OF5 Alor OF5

Lakfui. Ten of our baskets we used for the death feast [*Ato*] and ten we used to help buy a carabao at Hatoberka. 159[K]

We went to Hatoberka when the carabao was killed. We returned to Lakfui and made a garden. We got a lot of food and with it bought a Taksing gong. We didn't make a feast for the gong and didn't feed it. Because of this my father died.

We worked one year at Talmang and then moved back to Lakfui. We didn't have a good garden that year. It was full of blady grass. We made a small field house near the garden. I and Tilaleti [her older sister] worked in this garden. Mother and father stayed in the larger house at Lakfui. Each night father went to guard the field, but wild pigs came anyhow. So Tilaleti and I said that he should make a house at the foot of the garden, and we would live there to guard it; he could guard the top of the field. Each night we stayed awake to chase wild pigs. This went on until the corn was ripe and we could gather it.

At this time Mailang [a brother], mother, and father slept in the main house. After the harvest we two sisters returned to the main house. A man came and wanted to marry my sister. I said, "Elder sister, if you marry, I shall have to guard the field alone. We had better guard it together." But Tilaleti said, "No, a man has come and I must go. He does not want to stay here; he wants to go back to Atimelang." So those two went to Atimelang to live.

After that there was a smallpox epidemic. My siblings were all sick. First Mailang was sick. We were sleeping in the house one night when an owl came and beat the thatch with its wings. We thought perhaps it was a kinsman who had come to ask us to join him in Hanungmia. When we went there, many people chased us away because Mailang had smallpox. Then we went to Fuinangfana, but the people there also chased us away—I, mother, and Mailang. So we decided to live in a remote field house at Hanungmia. Lakakalieta and Kafolama said we were their relatives and that they would not chase us away. They built a field house for us to stay in. I, mother, Mailang, and Maralani went there to live. While we were staying there, a man from Kalmaabui, who also had smallpox, came to live with us. He died. Lonmani of Feba also was sick, came to us, and died. Melanglang also came to us because he was sick. I and Melanglang buried Lonmani. [It is not customary for women to bury the dead, but Kolangkalieta had had smallpox and was known to be immune.] Lonmani's brother-in-law came to help us and bring us food. He stayed with us and slept with mother. Later mother was pregnant. He caught smallpox too. He was afraid and ran away to [183 764]

1:Du Bois E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
OF5 Alor OF5

ready dead. So we went with our children to Hatoberka, where mother was staying. When we got there, mother was still talking, but the human being in her was dead. It was just the evil spirit talking. We went up into the house and mother said, "Where are all my grandchildren? I want to see them before I die." We said, "There are five of them here." I and Tilaleti cried and cried. Mother said, "Don't cry. I am going away. Don't cry here. All the Wanghieta lineage has already come with pigs and food. Go down and take their food from them; offer them areca nuts and betel to chew. Go take care of your guests." So I said, "People came to us and said you were dead; therefore I am crying." She said, "Yes, I am going. I am going. But you must not cry." Before mother died all her Elder House had gathered. We women all set to work to pound corn, not rice. Then Ataboi's father said, "I see that the women are pounding corn only. We had better go to the dead person's Male House." They all went to her Male House, who gave eight large baskets of rice, one pig, and one Tawansama moko as death gifts [*bangpil*]. I was given one large basket to pound. That night they beat gongs all night. I ordered people to go fetch a pig of mine to feed the gong beaters. The next day we buried her. That evening we beat gongs again. Then we went right ahead and gave not only the Hevelaberka and Hevelakang but also the Rolik feast. For the Rolik feast my husband brought a Piki moko, a Kabali moko, a small gong, and a Tamamia moko to help pay off the death obligations. The Tamamia moko was used for a payment on the death gifts to the Male House [*tubui*]. It went to the chief of Fungatao, who was mother's elder Male House [*nanu fing*]. The Piki and Kabali mokos and the gong were used to help pay for the shroud. At this time Ataboi [who was only fifteen or sixteen] and Mailang [her young brother] went to ask for a shroud in Aila. My husband and Padalang [her brother-in-law] also offered a woman's heavy shawl [*lemarieng*] as a shroud. [Which did you use?] Father died during an epidemic and we just buried him naked. [This happened when there were not enough shrouds to go around.] So we buried mother with two. One she was to give father to wear.

Eighteen people came to bring gongs, mokos, and pigs for mother's death feast. We used all of them to pay for the death feast gifts [*bangpil*] of the Male House and for the shrouds. We brought home only one pig. Manima, Ataboi's father, spoke to me and said, "How does it happen that all the Female House gathers to bring gongs and pigs?" I said, "It is because I always remember to give them things to eat.

I:Du Bois E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
OF5 Alor OF5

But you will not die." [Stop.] Then after a while he said, "You must not go to the woods. If you go, part of the greens you gather will be good and part bad; part of the tubers you dig will be good and part bad." [Stop.] This dream was long ago. After that many people died. At first I thought the dream was a lie, but later it proved to be true. It was the hungry season and many died. [Stop.] 159X

At that time I was sick in a house with two other people. One was to my right and one to my left. In the middle of the night one of the persons died. The other said, "Sprinkle me with water." I did and she stopped groaning. Then both were dead. I thought, "I am sick and there are two dead people here. What shall I do?" I slept. In the early morning I awoke. People had called Langmai, who was making a new house in our field. He came to bury the two dead people. He dug a grave and then came up and tied up their bodies. I was sick and weak, but I steadied the ladder for him as he carried down the corpse bundles. Langmai put the dead people's mats, water tubes, pots, and baskets in their bundles [instead of breaking them on top of the grave]. Kolmai ground corn and fed Langmai. When he finished eating, he said he was going to take me away. I had a small water tube with me. I could not walk well. I would take a few steps and have to stop and drink. I could hardly breathe. It was late in the afternoon before we reached the garden house Langmai was building. [Stop.] My abdomen was swollen and I had a big thing in my chest. I was very sick. I twisted and turned in my sleep. I dreamed that my dead brother spoke to me. "Younger sister, you are sick and you have big troubles, but I have come and your mother and father are following me. I cannot turn into a human being, but your mother has planted beans and peas in your field for you. Your husband can fetch them." [Stop.] I awoke in the morning and my abdomen was better. I could not walk, so I crawled out and roasted beans and peas to feed my brother's soul. I said, "Oh, brother, if you are making me sick, eat your beans and peas. You must not come near me any more and afflict me." Later I slept. I must have spoken in my sleep, because Langmai's older brother heard me talk. Fanlaka said, "Oh, this woman is talking. This is not good. Let us let her fall out of the house [i.e., kill her]." I awoke, sat by the fire, and cried. I had heard his words. I said, "Why, when I am sick, do you want to talk evil of me?" [Stop.] Later I was better and able to sit up. [764]

Then Langmai's father came to the house. He too was sick. When he wanted to leave the house, he could only crawl. He defecated and urinated in his loincloth. Langmai just ran away. I was weak and called

613 476 A more usual outlay is for the building of lineage houses. This is the joint responsibility of all the descendants in the male lines of a designated forebear, and the houses become the center of ancestral sacrifices. To build them, much heavy labor is needed, and in this labor the whole community is invited to help. In return the [437] helpers are feasted, and that means both buying pigs and slaughtering one's own. Since there may be a dozen or more such feasts in the course of erecting a lineage house, construction may progress in short stages over a period of years to allow for the necessary accumulation of pigs.

437 764 602 The death feasts are another object of expenditure. When a man dies, certain of his kin, the descendants of his mother's brothers, contribute the shroud, grave services, pigs and mokos. These preliminary feasts and services occur during the first eight days after death. Then, anywhere from a year to twenty years later, two return feasts must be given at which the mother's brothers' descendants are repaid at high rates of interest, which must be agreed upon by negotiation. They may range as high as three hundred and four hundred per cent. Obviously not all the dead get such elaborate financial treatment. The small payoffs on the burial rites for children or young men and women may be made as a side issue when feasts for their more important kin are given. The bookkeeping involved in these elaborate and long-drawn-out transactions must be carried in people's heads. There is no system of writing, not even a system of tallies, to keep track of their complexity. One man who gave such a feast summarized the transactions in connection with that ceremony alone. He had fifty-seven creditors and debtors involving two hundred items to remember. This was certainly no mean intellectual feat. I should hesitate to maintain a causal connection, but it is true that the singular accomplishments of the Alcrese in practical financial matters are paralleled by an equally singular lack of interest in what we should call abstract thinking or theorizing.

153

583 606 The largest, most persistent exchange relationship which a man establishes in his lifetime is with his wife's family. Marriage is in no way a religious or a ceremonial affair. It is essentially financial—the establishment of a system of group exchanges. There is first of all a bride price in mokos matched by a dowry in mokos. The dowry, however, is only about a third of the bride price. These exchanges are not paid all at once, but gradually over a period of many years. The girl goes to live in the boy's house when he pays the first and largest moko. After that the

[p. 485 B]